



**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER**

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December 9, 2005

TO: Mayor Michael D. Antonovich
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe *for*
FROM: J. Tyler McCauley *for*
Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT – LOS ANGELES
YOUTH NETWORK GROUP HOMES, BEACHWOOD HOUSE AND
TAFT HOUSE**

We have completed a review of Beachwood House and Taft House Group Homes operated by Los Angeles Youth Network Group Homes. The Agency contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation).

Beachwood House Group Home is a twelve-bed facility, and Taft House Group Home is a six bed facility. Each Group Home provides care for boys and girls ages 13–17 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, Beachwood House Group Home was providing services for six Los Angeles County DCFS children. Taft House Group Home was providing services for four Los Angeles County DCFS children.

Los Angeles Youth Network Group Homes are located in the Third District.

Scope of Review

The purpose of the review is to determine whether the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. Additionally, the review covers basic child safety and licensing issues, and includes an evaluation of the Agency's Program

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Statement, internal policies and procedures, child case records, a facility inspection, and interviews with children placed in the Group Home at the time of the review. Interviews with children are designed to obtain their perspectives on the program services provided by the Agency, and to ensure adherence to the Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

Summary of Findings

Generally, the Agency is providing the treatment services as outlined in their Program Statement. However, the Agency needs to address several deficient areas.

Both Group Homes need to paint the front porches; provide window screens throughout the homes; and clean the kitchens.

Beachwood House Group Home needs to clean and/or paint the front door and window sills and frames; paint the interior entryway and upstairs hallway; repair or replace window coverings in bedroom three; repair or replace closet doors in bedroom six; maintain a full complement of bed linens on all beds; provide children with the required minimum base allowance; and encourage and assist children in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Taft House Group Home needs to clean and/or paint the exterior trim and back door; remove backyard debris; clean the baseboards and lamp in the dining room; repair and/or replace missing and broken tiles from the kitchen countertop; clean the wall vent located near the kitchen; replace the paper towel dispenser in the downstairs bathroom; clean the bathtub area in the downstairs bathroom; install a functioning sink in the downstairs bathroom; clean the shower and provide additional lighting in the upstairs bathroom; provide adequate furnishings and storage in one of the bedrooms; maintain current Needs and Services Plans for all children; develop Needs and Services Plans that are comprehensive, and include short term and long-term goals; provide children with opportunities to participate in planning activities; provide children with sufficient planned recreational activities; and provide children with a sufficient quantity of clothing.

Attached is a detailed report of the review.

Review of Report

We discussed our report with the Agency's management. In response to the recommendations made in the report, the Agency's management completed a corrective action plan (attached) which we approved. We thank the management and staff for their cooperation during our review.

If you have any questions, please contact me, or have your staff contact Mike Pirolo at (626) 293-1110.

JTM:MP:CC:jdh
http://auditor.co.la.ca.us/group_home.asp

Attachments

c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer
David Sanders, Ph.D., Director, DCFS
Paul Higa, Chief Probation Officer
Liz Gomez, Executive Director, Los Angeles Youth Network Group Homes
Public Information Office
Audit Committee

**Los Angeles Youth Network
Beachwood House
2471 North Beachwood Street
Los Angeles, California 90068
Phone: (323) 467-8466
License Number: 197603055
Rate Classification Level: 10**

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment – Observation

Comments:

Beachwood House Group Home is located in a residential community. The front and back yards are clean, and adequately landscaped. However, the exterior of the Group Home needs improvement. The front porch, front door, and window sills and frames need to be cleaned and/or painted. The window screens throughout the home are missing.

Overall, the Group Home provides a home-like environment, and there is adequate furniture and lighting in the Group Home. However, the interior of the Group Home has areas that need to be addressed. The entryway and upstairs hallway need to be painted. The grout around the kitchen sink has mold and mildew, and the kitchen cabinets are dirty. The upstairs bathroom has mold and mildew on the floor near the bathtub.

Children's sleeping arrangements are appropriate. The rooms have age-appropriate personalized decorations. There is adequate furniture, lighting, and storage space. However, children's bedrooms are not well maintained. The blinds in bedroom three are dusty and bent, and the closet doors in bedroom six are broken. The mattresses are comfortable; however, children's beds do not have a full complement of linens.

The Group Home maintains age appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV, and a DVD player. Books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs, are also available.

The Group Home maintains a sufficient supply of perishable and non perishable foods.

Recommendations

1. Los Angeles Youth Network Management:

- a. Clean and/or paint the front porch, front door, window sills and frames.**

- b. Provide window screens throughout the house as needed.
- c. Paint the interior entryway and upstairs hallway.
- d. Clean the kitchen cabinets, kitchen sink and bathroom floor.
- e. Clean and repair/replace window coverings in bedroom three.
- f. Repair or replace closet doors in bedroom six.
- g. Ensure all children's beds have a full complement of linens, including a mattress pad, bottom sheet, top sheet, blanket and pillowcase.

II. Program Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

Children meet the Group Home's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Children are assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement.

The treatment team develops and implements the Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) with input from the child. The NSPs are current, comprehensive, and include long and short-term goals.

Case files reflect adequate documentation to show that children are receiving treatment services as identified in their NSPs.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

Children are attending school. Children are provided with educational support and resources to meet their educational needs, and are progressing satisfactorily in school. The Group Home's program includes the development of children's daily living, self-help, and survival skills.

Children are provided with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

The Group Home provides children with sufficient recreational activities, and leisure time. Children are given opportunities to participate in planning activities.

Children are allowed to participate in extra-curricular, enrichment, and social activities in which they have an interest.

The Group Home provides transportation to and from the activities.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

V. Psychotropic Medication

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents

Comments:

According to the Agency's management, there are currently no children receiving psychotropic medication. This information is appropriately documented.

Children are aware of their right to refuse medication.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VI. Personal Rights

Method of assessment –Interviews with children

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

Children are informed about the Group Home's policies and procedures. Children report that they feel safe in the Group Home, and are provided with appropriate staff supervision. Children express satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff, and report that staff treats them with respect and dignity.

Children report that they are assigned chores that are reasonable and not too demanding. Children are allowed to have private visitors, to make and receive personal telephone calls, and to send and receive unopened correspondence and mail. Children are able to attend religious services of their choice.

Children report that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Children report satisfaction with meals and snacks.

Children receive voluntary medical, dental, and psychiatric care.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VII. Clothing and Allowance

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

The Group Home provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity, and the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance to children. Children are given opportunities to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to children is of good quality and of sufficient quantity.

Children are permitted to spend their allowances as they choose. However, the Group Home does not provide children with the required minimum base allowance.

The Group Home provides children with adequate personal care items.

Children are not encouraged or assisted in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Recommendations

2. Los Angeles Youth Network Management:

- a. Provide children with the required minimum weekly base allowance.
- b. Encourage and assist children in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

**Los Angeles Youth Network
Taft House
1754 Taft Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90028
Phone: (323) 467-8366
License Number: 197603054
Rate Classification Level: 5**

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment – Observation

Comments:

Taft House Group Home is located in a residential community. The front yard is clean and adequately landscaped. However, the exterior trim, the front porch, and the back door need cleaning and/or painting. The back yard is full of debris.

The Group Home provides a home-like environment. However, the interior of the Group Home requires improvement. In the dining room, the baseboards are dirty and the ceiling fan is very dusty. In the kitchen, the countertop has a build up of grime and several broken and missing tiles, the cabinets and trash bin are dirty, and the wall vent near the kitchen has a build up of dust. In the downstairs bathroom, the paper towel dispenser is rusted, the bathtub area has mold and mildew and is discolored, there is a build up of dust, and the sink has been removed. In the upstairs bathroom, the shower has mold and mildew, and the lighting is insufficient. The window screens throughout the common areas of the home are missing.

The children's bedrooms have age-appropriate personalized decorations, and there is adequate lighting. Window coverings and window screens in the children's bedrooms are in good repair. The mattresses are comfortable and the beds all have a full complement of linens. The children's sleeping arrangements are generally appropriate; however, one bedroom does not have sufficient furnishings, storage, and closet space to accommodate children's belongings.

The Group Home maintains age appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV, and a DVD player. Books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs, are also available.

The Group Home maintains a sufficient supply of perishable and non perishable foods.

Recommendations

1. Los Angeles Youth Network Management:

- a. Clean and/or paint the front porch, the exterior trim, and the back door.
- b. Remove all debris from the backyard.
- c. Clean the baseboards and ceiling fan in the dining room.
- d. Clean the kitchen countertop, cabinets, and the trash bin.
- e. Repair and/or replace the missing and broken tiles from the kitchen countertop.
- f. Clean the wall vent located near the kitchen.
- g. Replace the paper towel dispenser in the downstairs bathroom.
- h. Clean the bathtub area and remove the dust in the downstairs bathroom.
- i. Install a functioning sink in the downstairs bathroom.
- j. Clean the shower in the upstairs bathroom.
- k. Provide additional lighting in the upstairs bathroom.
- l. Provide window screens throughout the house as needed.
- m. Provide adequate furnishings, storage and closet space in the bedroom with three children.

II. Program Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

Children meet the Group Home's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Children are assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement.

The treatment team develops and implements the Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) with input from the child. The NSP for one child is current; however, it is not comprehensive, and does not include long and short-term goals. The other child's NSP is not current.

Case files reflect adequate documentation to show that children are receiving treatment services.

Recommendations

2. Los Angeles Youth Network Management:

- a. Maintain current Needs and Services Plans for all children.
- b. Develop Needs and Services Plans that are comprehensive, and include short term and long-term goals.

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

Children are attending school. Children are provided with educational support and resources to meet their educational needs, and are progressing satisfactorily in school. The Group Home's program includes the development of children's daily living, self-help, and survival skills.

Children are provided with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

The Group Home provides children with leisure time. However, children are not given opportunities to participate in planning activities, and are not provided with sufficient recreational activities.

Children are allowed to participate in self-selected social activities in which they have an interest.

The Group Home provides transportation to and from planned group activities. Children are encouraged to familiarize themselves and to utilize public transportation for their day-to-day activities.

Recommendations

3. Los Angeles Youth Network Management:

- a. Provide children with opportunities to participate in planning activities.**
- b. Provide children with sufficient recreational activities.**

V. Psychotropic Medication

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents

Comments:

According to the Agency's management, there are currently no children receiving psychotropic medication. This information is appropriately documented.

Children are aware of their right to refuse medication.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VI. Personal Rights

Method of assessment –Interviews with children

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

Children are informed about the Group Home's policies and procedures. Children report that they feel safe in the Group Home, and are provided with appropriate staff supervision. Children express satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff, and report that staff treats them with respect and dignity.

Children report that they are assigned chores that are reasonable and not too demanding. Children are allowed to have private visitors, to make and receive personal telephone calls, and to send and receive unopened correspondence and mail. Children are able to attend religious services of their choice.

Children report that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Children report satisfaction with meals and snacks.

Children receive voluntary medical, dental, and psychiatric care.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VII. Clothing and Allowance

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

The Group Home provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity, and the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance to children. Children are given opportunities to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to children is of good quality and sufficient quantity.

The Group Home provides children with the required minimum base allowance. Children are permitted to spend their allowances as they choose.

The Group Home provides one child with adequate personal care items; however, the other child reports that she is not. One child is encouraged and assisted in creating and maintaining a photo album/life book; however, the other child is not.

Recommendations

4. Los Angeles Youth Network Management:

- a. Provide all children with appropriate personal care items to meet their individual needs.
- b. Encourage and assist all children in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.



Via fax 213 346-9020

Corrective Action Plan for Los Angeles Youth Network Facilities

Attention: Carla Carr, Group Home Ombudsman
Department of Auditor-Controller, Kenneth Hahn Hall Administration
500 W. Temple Street, Room 515-A, Los Angeles CA 90012

Los Angeles Youth Network
Beachwood House
2471 N. Beachwood Street
Los Angeles, CA 90068
Lic # 197603055

Recommendations and Status of Correction

I. Facility and Environment.

- 1a) Clean or paint exterior front entry-way and front door. The area has been cleaned and will be painted by October 31, 2005.
- 1b) All window screens have been replaced.
- 1c) Interior entry way has been cleaned and re painted by Aug 31, 2005.
- 1d) Kitchen cabinets, sink and floor have been cleaned. The floor has been re-placed. The cabinets need to be refaced, they are old and worn. They will be refaced by October 31, 2005.
- 1e) All window coverings on the 1st and second floor have been replaced, removed or repaired.
- 1f) Closet doors in bedroom six have been repaired.
- 1g) All linens have been placed on the children's beds. The youth are responsible for making and keeping up with their beds. We will do our best to meet this requirement.
- 1h) Upstairs Hallway has been re-painted.

- 1i) All furniture has been replaced or repaired as necessary.
- 1j) The upstairs bathrooms have been cleaned of mold and mildew and the floor in the upstairs east bathroom are on the list to be repaired by 9/30/05.

VII. Clothing and Allowance

- 2a) We have since become current with all allowance requirements.
- 2b) Again we are working on the photo albums with the youth. We will try to implement a group to facilitate the maintenance of them.

Los Angeles Youth Network
Taft House
1754 Taft Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90028
Lic # 197600354

Corrective Action Plan Recommendations and Status of Correction:

I. Facility and Environment

- 1a) The front entry way is mainly brick and we recently cut back ivy and the ceiling is stained. We will paint the entry way by December 31, 2005.
- 1b) We will need 6 months to paint all of the window trims outside. Expected completion by January 06.
- 1c) The back door jam is clean.
- 1d) All windows have screens.
- 1e) The baseboards, molding and ceiling fans have been cleaned.
- 1f) All mini blinds have been replaced or removed as appropriate.
- 1g) The counter top has been cleaned.
- 1h) The kitchen counter top tiles have been replaced.
- 1i) The kitchen cabinets and trash bin are clean.
- 1j) The wall vent is clean.
- 1k) The bathroom sink downstairs has been replaced.
- 1l) The paper towel dispenser has been replaced.
- 1m) We will need six months to replace or reglaze the tub in the downstairs bathroom. The youth use the shower on the 2nd floor. Expected Completion by Jan 06.
- 1n) Mold and mildew have been removed with Tilex cleaner.
- 1o) We will add dressers to the bedrooms that need them by August 31, 2005.
- 1p) All furniture will be fixed or replaced as needed.

1q) The closets have been equipped with the necessary shelving and posts.

1r) The lighting in the upstairs bathroom has been increased.

II. Program Services

1a&b) All Service Plans will be kept up to date according to the youths length of stay, including short term goals as appropriate.

IV. Recreation and Activities

3a&b) The youth participate in planning activities and attend weekly circus group as well as beach, park and movie outings.

VII. Clothing and Allowance

4) The youth are provided with the necessary clothing and will be provided with a variety of toiletry options.

4a) The youth will receive the appropriate allowance.

Each house has an on site Coordinator and they will ensure that the houses are up to par. We have implemented a system where each of our Coordinators will inspect one of the other facilities quarterly to ensure we are up to standard.

As the Executive Director I am aware that I am ultimately responsible for all of our facilities. The cleanliness will be worked on as well as maintenance of the facility and environment.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth M. Gomez
Executive Director

Cc: Katherine McMahon, Beachwood
Suzanne Squires, Taft